



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Deputy Under Secretary for
Oceans and Atmosphere
Washington, D.C. 20230

TO ALL INTERESTED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND PUBLIC GROUPS:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act, an Environmental Assessment (EA) has been performed on the following action:

TITLE: M/V KUROSHIMA Oil Spill

LOCATION: Summer Bay, Unalaska, Alaska

SUMMARY: The Trustees for the M/V KUROSHIMA oil spill have completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) to restore natural resources injured by the release of oil in Summer Bay, Unalaska, Alaska. The EA includes restoration projects for the following five identified categories of natural resources affected by the spill: birds; shoreline vegetation; shellfish and intertidal biota; salmonids and lake resources; and recreational uses. The following restoration projects have been identified: conducting predator removal and control measures to enhance nesting success for seabird populations affected by the spill; restoration of vegetation oiled by the spill and monitoring to evaluate the success and need for additional planting; testing of intertidal shellfish contamination and education on seafood safety; sediment control, lakeshore revegetation, limnological survey work and enumeration of salmon smolt outmigration and adult escapement; funding beach clean-up activities to compensate for lost or diminished human use during the oil spill and subsequent cleanup operations; purchase of tents and other facilities to be publicly available for use year round as well as for a summer environmental education camp; and a community-wide education program designed to reduce adverse impacts of recreation and other public uses that may impede recovery of natural resources or affect restoration efforts.

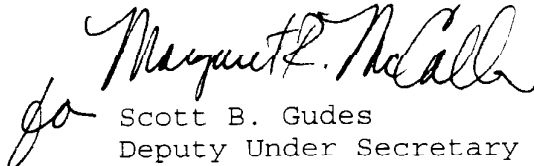
The public and other interested parties have participated in public meetings during the permitting process. The environmental review process has led us to conclude that these restoration actions will not have a significant effect on the human environment. Consequently, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration submitted the plan for an issuance of a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) which was approved.



RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: William T. Hogarth, Ph.D.
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
301/713-2239

Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared. A copy of the finding of no significant impact including the supporting EA is available upon request to the responsible official.

Sincerely,


do Scott B. Gudes
Deputy Under Secretary for
Oceans and Atmosphere

Enclosure

Finding of No Significant Impact
Restoration plan and environmental assessment
for the
November 26, 1997 M/V Kuroshima oil spill
into Summer Bay, Unalaska, Alaska

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is a cooperating federal agency for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance for the Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment (RP/EA) for the November 26, 1997 M/V Kuroshima oil spill into Summer Bay, Unalaska, Alaska. Other cooperating agencies include the U.S. Department of the Interior through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, the Alaska Department of Law (the Trustees) and the Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska. These parties participated in damage assessment and restoration planning activities to address injuries to natural resources and resource services resulting from the spill.

The Trustees, in consultation with the Qawalangin Tribe, evaluated several types of restoration alternatives: the no action/natural recovery alternative, ecological restoration alternatives, and lost human use restoration alternatives. Within those alternatives, several restoration projects were evaluated to determine what projects would best meet the goals and objectives of the Trustees. The Trustees concluded that their preferred restoration alternatives would be a mix of both the ecological and the lost human use alternatives. The particular projects include: removal of introduced predators to enhance seabird populations; restoration and monitoring of oiled vegetation; additional testing of intertidal shellfish and education on seafood safety; sediment control and lakeshore revegetation, limnological survey work and enumeration of salmon smolt outmigration and adult escapement; beach debris cleanup activities; purchase of tents and other recreation facilities for public use; and funding for public environmental education. The draft RP/EA was presented to the public and comments were addressed prior to finalizing the RP/EA.

DETERMINATION:

Based upon an environmental review and evaluation of the Final Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment of the November 26, 1997 M/V Kuroshima Oil Spill into Summer Bay, Unalaska, Alaska, I have determined that the proposed action does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102 (2) (c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. Accordingly, an environmental impact statement is not required for this project.



Date 4/30/02

William T. Hogarth, Ph.D.
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
National Marine Fisheries Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce

- g) On-site riparian habitat improvements and restoration of the natural vegetation along the lakeshore will benefit the ecological function and human uses of the region. Healthy shoreline vegetation will also indirectly benefit aquatic vegetation, juvenile fish habitat, and nutrient levels in the lake. The replanting of native vegetation should have minimal adverse impacts on the local environment. Borrow sites will be carefully selected to minimize harm and will be restored to minimize the potential for erosion.
- h) The salmon enumeration and limnological sampling is a monitoring effort. All work will be conducted following approved and established fishery management practices and methods.
- i) The procurement of tent platforms, weather ports, potable water and sanitation facilities for public and camp use will provide on-site recreational benefits similar to those lost as a result of the incident. The camp structures will have a small footprint and minimal construction related activities. The sanitation facilities and site maintenance will benefit both users' health and the environment.
- j) The development of an environmental education curriculum will benefit the community and the environment by improving the community's awareness and stewardship of the affected natural resources.
- k) Shoreline maintenance is expected to provide a long-term benefit to local natural resources. Some short-term disruption may occur as a result of personnel walking along the shoreline and dragging bags or debris to nearby vehicles for disposal.

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached environmental assessment and discussed above, I have determined that the proposed actions will not have any significant impacts on the environment and, therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required.



David B. Allen
Regional Director
Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 7
U.S. Department of the Interior

Date: APR 11 2002